

RESPONSES TO ARTICLES

George Fisher, Jr. (#1152), author of the article "Using The Adachi Japanese Perfin Catalog," which appeared in the November - December 1975 Bulletin, offers the following very interesting and informative comments in regard to Japanese items appearing on Bob Schwerdt's page full of "whatsit" items in the May issue:

Figure 6. The Xerox is not good enough to read all the characters, especially the row of characters at the extreme right which is sliced right down their middle. One obvious observation, however, is that the illustration is upside down. The very tiny portions of the stamps which are legible seem to equate with certain revenue stamps of Japan. If Mr. Schwerdt cares to send the whole item to me, I'd be glad to give it a whirl.

Figure 7. The "stamp" is not a stamp but a seal, and it is not Perfinned but perforated. The right side of the seal as illustrated is actually the top. The row of large characters, which reads from left to right, says "genkin fukanshi," which means "cash seal," the "shi" part of the word indicating a seal made of paper rather than something else, such as sealing wax. The small characters, also reading left-to-right, are "Misei Shō," meaning "Ministry of Postal Services." The Japanese postal ministry has for many years issued special envelopes for mailing cash, and these seals are used to seal the flap. The perforations enable the stamp to be easily torn when the envelope is opened, but it is also difficult to open such an envelope at the flap or flaps without tearing the seal (the seal is made from very thin and fairly delicate paper); this construction, of course, is purposeful as a security measure.

The perforations across the stamp are a repetition of the design across the stamp; this design is a stylized representation of the Japanese syllabic character "te" (て), which is the first syllable of the Japanese word "teishin," meaning "communications" and the principal word in "Ministry of Communications." This design is the official symbol of the postal ministry (which has undergone a few name changes through the years and is now the Yusei Shō, although it used to be Teishin Shō); wherever this symbol is printed on Japanese maps it indicates the location of a postal facility.

There are several other cash-envelope seals, as well as seals for other purposes, all with this "te" perforation across the seals. This particular seal was issued 15 December 1962, perforation 13x13½ in sheets of 100 (10x10) in light green on foreign-style gummed paper. A major Japanese catalog values the seal at ¥ 10 (U.S. 3.3¢) unused and ¥ 5 (U.S. 1.7¢) used.

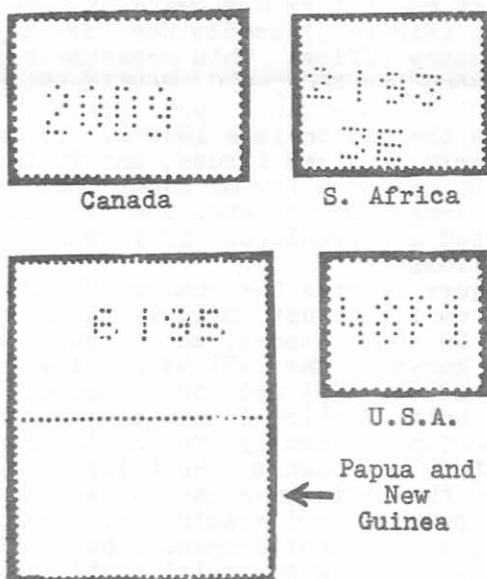
I hope this explains why this item is not in Adachi's catalog.

Leif Bergman (#1109) of Lidings, Sweden, writes to offer additional information concerning Faroese Perfin, which were the subject of an article by James H. Baker in the March Bulletin.

Bergman states that according to the late Ostergaard Hansen, the Perfin "V.L." existed on provisionals. He says Hansen may have listed this in "Posthistorisk Tidsskrift," together with other Danish Perfins. Bergman points out that Lot #818 in the Danam Stamp Company Auction of May 1 and June 1, 1976, is "V.L." Perfin on provisionals tied to a piece from 1940. Bergman states that his own oldest copy of this Perfin is from 1935.

Jack Brandt (#763) has sent the editor photos of Perfins from several countries, in which the Perfins are comprised of numbers. He mentions a previous reference to such Perfins by the former editor, Floyd Walker, which, he states, turned out to be from address labels attached to films sent in for processing.

Brandt says he doesn't think this is prevalent in the United States due to our monopoly laws, but that over the last few years he has noted such numeral Perfins from quite a few countries. He submits the following photos:



Brandt states that he has similar numeral Perfins from Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, German Federal Republic, Great Britain, Greece, Hong Kong, Lesotho, New Zealand, Papua and New Guinea, Rhodesia, Samoa, South Africa, Swaziland, Thailand and the U.S.A. He says the Swiss catalog also mentions such Perfins as occurring on Swiss stamps.